

MAY 18 2007

**REMARKS:**

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-9, 11-16 and 21-23 were pending. Claims 9, 11-14 and 16 stand allowed, claims 1-8, 15 and 21 were rejected, and claims 21-23 were withdrawn. Pursuant to this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended, and claims 15 and 21-23 have been cancelled. Claims 1-9, 11-14 and 16 remain pending in the subject application.

Allowance of claims 9, 11-14 and 16 is noted with thanks.

Claim 15 has been cancelled, thereby making the 112 rejection thereto moot.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Antonucci et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,119,306). Claims 1-3, 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kwilosz (U.S. Patent No. 6,799,931). These rejections are traversed for at least the following reasons.

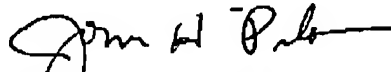
Without agreeing with the Examiner as to what is or is not taught by the art of record, claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define what it is the applicants regard as the invention. More specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the end cap includes at least one retaining wall extending outwardly from an inner surface of the end cap so that the at least one retaining wall seats against and within the open end of the bar. Neither Antonucci et al. nor Kwilosz include, among other things, these limitations now recited in amended claim 1. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons applied thereto, as well as for the additional subject matter recited in each.

No new matter has been added by way of the amendments and remarks made herein. Allowance of all the pending claims is respectfully requested. In the event that there are any remaining issues that need to be addressed, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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